

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A feminine care absorbent article, comprising:
  - a. a liquid permeable top sheet on a first side of said feminine care absorbent article;
  - 5 b. a generally liquid impermeable back sheet on a second side of said feminine care absorbent article;
  - c. an absorbent core between said top sheet and said back sheet, said absorbent core comprising a first longitudinal segment and a second longitudinal segment transversely separated from said first longitudinal segment, wherein said first and second longitudinal segments have an anterior end and a posterior end; and
  - 10 d. a flexible zone between said first and second longitudinal segments, said flexible zone having a reduced absorbency compared to said absorbent core.
2. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 1, wherein each of said first and second longitudinal segments has a transverse width of less than about 20 millimeters.
3. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 1, wherein said flexible zone has a transverse width of at least 10 millimeters.
- 20 4. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 1, wherein said absorbent core further comprises a transverse segment proximate to said anterior ends of said first and second longitudinal segments.
5. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 1, wherein said absorbent core further comprises a transverse segment proximate to said posterior ends of said first and second longitudinal segments.
- 25 6. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 1, wherein said flexible zone comprises a superabsorbent.
- 30 7. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 1, wherein said flexible zone comprises a surfactant.

8. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 1, further including an absorbent strip between said first and second longitudinal segments.
9. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 1, further including a  
5 transverse flexible strip between said first and second longitudinal segments.
10. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 1, further including a transfer layer between said top sheet and said absorbent core.
11. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 1, wherein said  
10 liquid permeable top sheet peripherally joins to said generally liquid impermeable back sheet.
12. An absorbent article, comprising:
  - a. a liquid permeable top sheet on a first side of said absorbent article;
  - 15 b. a generally liquid impermeable back sheet on a second side of said absorbent article;
  - c. a plurality of longitudinal absorbent segments between said top sheet and said back sheet, said longitudinal absorbent segments having an anterior end and a posterior end; and
  - 20 d. a flexible zone between said longitudinal absorbent segments, said flexible zone having a reduced thickness compared to said longitudinal absorbent segments.
13. The absorbent article as in claim 12, wherein each of said  
25 longitudinal absorbent segments has a width of less than about 20 millimeters.
14. The absorbent article as in claim 12, wherein said flexible zone has a transverse width of at least 10 millimeters.
15. The absorbent article as in claim 12, further including a transverse absorbent segment proximate to said anterior ends of said  
30 longitudinal absorbent segments.
16. The absorbent article as in claim 12, further including a transverse absorbent segment proximate to said posterior ends of said longitudinal absorbent segments.

17. The absorbent article as in claim 12, wherein said flexible zone comprises a superabsorbent.
18. The absorbent article as in claim 12, wherein said flexible zone comprises a surfactant.
- 5 19. The absorbent article as in claim 12, further including a transverse flexible strip between said longitudinal absorbent segments.
20. The absorbent article as in claim 12, further including a transfer layer between said top sheet and said longitudinal absorbent segments.
- 10 21. The absorbent article as in claim 12, wherein said liquid permeable top sheet peripherally joins to said generally liquid impermeable back sheet.
22. A feminine care absorbent article, comprising:
  - 15 a. a liquid permeable cover on a first side of said feminine care absorbent article;
  - b. a generally liquid impermeable baffle on a second side of said feminine care absorbent article;
  - c. an absorbent core between said cover and said baffle having a longitudinal axis and a transverse axis;
  - 20 d. wherein said absorbent core has a stepped absorbent capacity and a stepped flexibility along said transverse axis.
23. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 22, wherein said absorbent core has a substantially constant absorbent capacity and a substantially constant flexibility along said longitudinal axis.
- 25 24. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 22, wherein said absorbent core has minimal absorbent capacity and maximum flexibility along said longitudinal axis.
25. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 22, wherein said liquid permeable cover peripherally joins to said generally liquid impermeable baffle.
- 30 26. A feminine care absorbent article, comprising:
  - a. a liquid permeable cover on a first side of said feminine care absorbent article;

- b. a generally liquid impermeable baffle on a second side of said feminine care absorbent article;
  - c. an absorbent core between said cover and said baffle, said absorbent core comprising a first longitudinal segment and a second longitudinal segment transversely separated from said first longitudinal segment;
  - d. wherein said absorbent core has an extended position in which said first and second longitudinal segments are transversely separated by approximately 10 millimeters; and
  - e. wherein said absorbent core has a compressed position in which said first and second longitudinal segments are substantially together.
27. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 26, wherein said absorbent core has a longitudinal axis having a substantially constant absorbent capacity and a substantially constant flexibility.
28. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 26, wherein said absorbent core has minimal absorbent capacity and maximum flexibility along said longitudinal axis.
29. The feminine care absorbent article as in claim 26, wherein said liquid permeable cover peripherally joins to said generally liquid impermeable baffle.